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Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

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GROWING FAMILIES



Rebeka Romero cries as she hugs her sons Joseph, 8, left, and Travis, 10, after their adoption was finalized Thursday at the Lindsey-Flanigan Courthouse in Denver. Rebeka and her husband, Travis, have fostered the boys and their sister, Lilly, 4, for 22 months. National Adoption Day is Sunday, and Colorado’s judges and magistrates are finalizing the adoptions of 159 foster children this month. *Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post* **Story »4A**

FATE IN SENATE UNCLEAR

House passes GOP tax bill

By Alan Fram and Marcy Gordon The Associated Press

WASHINGTON» Republicans rammed a \$1.5 trillion overhaul of business and personal income taxes through the House on Thursday, edging toward the code’s biggest rewrite in three decades and the first major legislative triumph for President Donald Trump and the GOP after 10 bumpy months of controlling government. The mostly party-line 227-205 vote masked more ominous problems in the Senate. There, a similar package received a politically awkward verdict from nonpartisan congressional analysts showing it eventually would produce higher taxes for low- and middle-income earners but deep reductions for those better off. Those projections came a day after Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson became the first GOP senator to state opposition to the measure, saying it didn’t cut levies enough for millions of partnerships and corporations. With at least five other Republican senators yet to declare support, the bill’s fate is far from certain in a chamber the GOP controls by just 52-48. Even so, Republicans are hoping to send a compromise bill for Trump to sign by Christmas. “Now is the time to deliver,” the White House said in a written statement that underscored the party’s effort to maintain momentum. **TAXES »21A**

Local comedy scene faces allegations

By John Wenzel The Denver Post

Denver’s nationally renowned comedy scene has been roiled in recent weeks by a growing number of female performers alleging incidents of sexual harassment and discrimination at some of the city’s

best-known venues. But many improv performers and stand-ups are reluctant to go into specifics, worried they will alienate potential audiences or bookers, according to more than two dozen interviews conducted by The Denver Post. And as the stand-up and improv scenes confront their de-

mons — a complicated task, given the frequently raunchy on-stage material that pushes the limits of propriety — performers and activists are finding it difficult to even discuss the issue without conflict. Most recently, two women have accused Voodoo Comedy Playhouse founder Stephen

Wilder, as well as current and former staff and performers, of sexual misconduct dating back several years. In an interview with The Denver Post, Wilder denied any incidents of assault by himself or his staff. He said he is unaware of pending legal action or charges. **VOODOO »15A**

Boulder nonprofit founder arrested, charged with fraud

By Christopher N. Osher The Denver Post

Boulder police on Thursday arrested Andrew Baron on felony charges of charity fraud and theft in excess of \$100,000 from Humanwire, a nonprofit he said he established to help Syrian refugees. The arrest follows an investigative report in The Denver Post on the practices of the Boulder-based charity, which managed refugee campaigns in Greece,



Andrew Baron faces charges of charity fraud and theft from Humanwire, a nonprofit he founded to help Syrian refugees. Turkey and Lebanon. Humanwire advertises on its website that pledges from donors go directly to needy refugees with **ARREST »7A**

DENVER & THE WEST VA USED OFF-BOOK WAIT LISTS

An investigation reveals that VA officials in Colorado broke agency rules by improperly tracking mental health patients, which delayed their care. **»2A**

Franken agrees to ethics probe in harassment case

By Cathleen Decker Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON» Sen. Al Franken apologized Thursday after a Los Angeles radio show anchor said he had forcibly kissed her and groped her on a 2006 USO tour. Amid a blizzard of criticism, he said he would “gladly cooperate” with a Senate Ethics Committee investigation into his actions. “I respect women. I don’t re-

spect men who don’t,” said Franken, a Minnesota Democrat who joined the Senate in 2009 after a career as a comedian. “And the fact that my own actions have given people a good reason to doubt that makes me feel ashamed.” Leeann Tweeden, a news anchor on KABC’s “McIntyre in the Morning,” said in a post on the station’s website Thursday and in interviews throughout the day **FRANKEN »16A**

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